

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ACDA-07
/077 W

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R 080902Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5150
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1349

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, ET, IS
SUBJ: ISRAELI PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA

REF: MOGADISCIO 1348

1. ON AUGUST 7 BRITISH JOURNALIST COLIN LEGUM GAVE US BRIEF SUMMARY OF HIS TALKS WITH ISRAELI OFFICIALS IN TEL AVIV REGARDING ISRAELI PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA. LEGUM DIS-AGREES WITH ISRAELI POLICY OF MAINTAINING ADVISORS IN ETHIOPIA AND WANTED TO AIR HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTRY AND INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS DURING HIS TEL AVIV STOPOVER. FOREIGN MINISTRY HEARD HIM OUT AND THEN SENT HIM OFF TO TALK TO MOSSAD OFFICIALS.

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2. LEGUM SAID THAT ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE MADE UP OF TWO HOUSES -- THE ARMS MERCHANTS AND THE POLITICAL THEORISTS.

3. ISRAELI ARMS MERCHANTS CONTINUE TO RUN THEIR SWIFT SHIPS DOWN THE RED SEA TO MASSAWA CARRYING MILITARY SUPPLIES AND OTHER ITEMS. LEGUM DOESN'T KNOW WHAT MOSSAD IS PROVIDING OR WHAT ELSE SWIFT SHIPS ARE DOING BUT

SUPPLY EFFORT IS CONTINUING. ISRAEL CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS IN ETHIOPIA BUT HE WAS TOLD THAT ADVISORS WERE NO LONGER INVOLVED IN ANY TRAINING EFFORT. ACCORDING TO MOSSAD, SOVIETS AND CUBANS DON'T LIKE THE CONTINUING ISRAELI PRESENCE BUT THERE IS LITTLE THEY CAN DO ABOUT IT.

4. ON POLICY SIDE, MOSSAD TOLD LEGUM THAT ISRAELI POSITION SIMPLE AND CLEAR CUT. MENGISTU REGIME WANTED ISRAELI PRESENCE TO REMAIN AND GOI WAS OBLIGING. ISRAEL WORRIED ABOUT ARAB ENCIRCLEMENT OF RED SEA AND ARAB AMBITIONS TO COMPLETELY CONTROL COASTAL LITTORAL. ISRAEL'S SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIA SOULD HELP FRUSTRATE THAT DESIGN. IF THIS SUPPORT ALLIED ISRAEL WITH SOVIET UNION IN ADDIS, THEN SO BE IT: BETTER TO COLLABORATE WITH SOVIET UNION THAN KNUCKLE UNDER TO ARABS.

5. ON OGADEN INSURGENCY, ISRAELI SOURCES TOLD LEGUM THAT SIAD'S SUCCESS AGAINST ETHIOPIAN FORCES WOULD BE SHORT-LIVED. ETHIOPIANS WOULD INEVITABLY GATHER THEIR BREATH, MUSTER THEIR FORCES AND DRIVE SOMALIS BACK ACROSS BORDER.

6. LEGUM IS SCEPTICAL. HE IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT MENGISTU'S ABILITY TO UNITE ETHIOPIA'S ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM TO EVICT SOMALI GUERRILLA FORCES. HE
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BELIEVES ETHIOPIA TOO FRAGMENTED UNDER MENGISTU TO TAKE DECISIVE ACTION IN ANY DIRECTION. HE BELIEVES STABILITY IN ETHIOPIA IS A LONG WAY OFF AND THAT GOI HAS THUS IDENTIFIED ITSELF WITH AN OPPRESSIVE REGIME AND A FUTILE CAUSE.
LOUGHRAN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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